

SENATE, No. 407

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Senator SHIRLEY K. TURNER

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes "Naturally Occurring Retirement Community" pilot program; appropriates \$250,000.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 AN ACT establishing a "Naturally Occurring Retirement
2 Community" pilot program and making an appropriation.
3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*
6

7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

8 a. Elderly residents of this State are aging in place in their
9 communities and they prefer to remain in their familiar
10 surroundings, near families and friends, and receive services in their
11 communities;

12 b. A residential area with a high concentration of elderly
13 residents who are aging in place is known as a "Naturally Occurring
14 Retirement Community" or "NORC";

15 c. The housing in a NORC differs from senior-designated
16 housing because it was not originally built as housing for the
17 elderly; NORC housing is age-integrated but more than 50 percent
18 of the households are headed by a person who is 60 years of age or
19 older;

20 d. NORC programs are intended for persons with moderate or
21 low incomes and, by their nature, are proactive and take a holistic,
22 preventive approach to the health and well-being of elderly
23 residents;

24 e. The establishment and implementation of a NORC pilot
25 program that addresses the needs of elderly residents by providing a
26 wide array of social, health care, mental health, transportation, and
27 other support services in a defined community would help some
28 State residents age in place and serve as a model to expand the
29 program Statewide; and

30 f. A NORC pilot program can best be implemented through the
31 action of a lead agency to administer the overall fiscal, managerial,
32 and programmatic responsibilities of the pilot program and to
33 recruit and coordinate the services of program partners, including
34 service agencies, civic organizations, volunteers, and the residents
35 of the defined community.
36

37 2. a. There is established a "Naturally Occurring Retirement
38 Community" or "NORC" pilot program in the Division of Aging
39 Services in the Department of Human Services.

40 b. The Commissioner of Human Services shall provide a grant
41 to a lead agency for the agency to provide a basket of services to
42 assist eligible seniors to remain in the community and "age in
43 place" in a selected defined community, whether at a senior center
44 in Mercer County, or one or more moderate or low-income
45 apartment buildings or housing complexes in Mercer County, or
46 within a defined geographic area in Mercer County, in which at
47 least 50 percent of the households are headed by a person who is 60

1 years of age or older in order to implement the pilot program
2 pursuant to the provisions of this act.

3 An eligible applicant to be the lead agency shall be an entity with
4 demonstrated experience and expertise in providing a basket of
5 services to populations who are “aging in place” and in
6 administering related initiatives in the community. It may provide
7 the full array of services directly, or in collaboration with other
8 experienced providers. The lead agency may be a non-profit or a
9 for-profit organization, but selection shall be evaluated on the
10 organization’s ability to provide services in a comprehensive and
11 cost-effective manner, to recruit partners such as service agencies,
12 civic organizations, the residents, and other volunteers to assess the
13 needs and resources of the community and formulate policy, and the
14 ability to coordinate and integrate the services offered.

15 c. The pilot program shall provide:

16 (1) social services, including, but not limited to, on-site
17 assessments, information and referral services, case management,
18 counseling, recreation and socialization programs, management of
19 volunteer programs, support groups, and education programs that
20 help elderly residents preserve their health;

21 (2) health care services, including, but not limited to, on-site
22 nursing and physician services, health screenings and monitoring,
23 and medication management;

24 (3) mental health services, including, but not limited to, a
25 consulting psychiatrist to assess, diagnose, and treat residents and
26 educate other professional staff, patients, caregivers, and families to
27 detect and assess mental health needs, and mental health screening
28 by a social worker or registered professional nurse; and

29 (4) support services, including, but not limited to, transportation
30 services and assistance with shopping and financial management.

31 d. The lead agency shall periodically report to the
32 commissioner on the establishment of the pilot program and the
33 impact of the pilot program on the well-being of the residents. In
34 its report, the lead agency shall employ a formal outcomes
35 measurement tool, administered at multiple points in time, to assess
36 the impact of the program on older adults’ health and well-being, as
37 well as the potential cost savings of these outcomes for long-term
38 care, health, and human services delivery systems. The report shall
39 include outcomes-based data, including, but not limited to, systemic
40 cost savings represented by:

41 (1) a reduction in the number of emergency room visits by older
42 adults;

43 (2) a reduction in the number of overnight hospital stays by
44 older adults;

45 (3) a reduction in the number of older adults moving into
46 institutional care;

47 (4) a reduction in out-of-pocket health care costs and increase in
48 older adults’ economic security; and

1 (5) a reduction in risk factors for functional decline, such as
2 depression and social isolation.

3 The lead agency may allocate up to 7.5 percent of grant funds
4 toward the costs of evaluation, to include software, consulting
5 services, and staff time to analyze outcomes and evaluate the
6 program.

7 e. The commissioner shall report to the Governor, and to the
8 Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1),
9 on the pilot program within two years of its implementation and
10 make any recommendations the commissioner deems appropriate to
11 expand the program to other counties in the State.

12
13 3. There is appropriated \$250,000 from the General Fund to the
14 Department of Human Services to provide a grant to the entity
15 selected to be the lead agency to implement the NORC pilot
16 program established pursuant to this act in a defined community in
17 Mercer County.

18
19 4. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire upon
20 the submission of the report by the commissioner pursuant to
21 section 2 of this act.

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24 STATEMENT

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26 This bill establishes a “Naturally Occurring Retirement
27 Community” or “NORC” pilot program in the Division of Aging
28 Services in the Department of Human Services and appropriates
29 \$250,000 for a grant to implement the pilot program.

30 The Commissioner of Human Services is to provide a grant to a
31 lead agency to establish and coordinate a NORC at a senior center
32 in Mercer County, or one or more moderate or low-income
33 apartment buildings or housing complexes in Mercer County, or
34 within a selected defined community in Mercer County in which at
35 least 50% of the households are headed by a person who is 60 years
36 of age or older.

37 The pilot program would provide:

38 -- social services, including, but not limited to, on-site
39 assessments, information and referral services, case management,
40 counseling, recreation and socialization programs, management of
41 volunteer programs, support groups, and education programs that
42 help elderly residents preserve their health;

43 -- health care services, including, but not limited to, on-site
44 nursing and physician services, health screenings and monitoring,
45 and medication management;

46 -- mental health services, including, but not limited to, a
47 consulting psychiatrist to assess, diagnose, and treat residents and
48 educate other professional staff, patients, caregivers, and families to

1 detect and assess mental health needs, and mental health screening
2 by a social worker or registered professional nurse; and

3 -- support services, including, but not limited to, transportation
4 services and assistance with shopping and financial management.

5 The bill requires the lead agency to periodically report to the
6 commissioner on the establishment of the pilot program and its
7 impact on the well-being of the residents. The commissioner is to
8 report to the Governor and the Legislature on the pilot program
9 within two years of its implementation and make any
10 recommendations that the commissioner deems appropriate to
11 expand the program to other counties in the State.

12 The bill establishes a “lead agency,” which would act to
13 administer the overall fiscal, managerial, and programmatic
14 responsibilities of the pilot program and recruit and coordinate the
15 services of program partners. The bill directs the Department of
16 Human Services to award a grant to a lead agency to implement the
17 NORC pilot program. In awarding the grant, the bill allows the
18 department to select an organization to be the lead agency that
19 provides the full array of services directly, or provides them in
20 collaboration with other experienced providers. The bill directs the
21 department to evaluate the selection of the organization on the
22 organization’s ability to provide services in a comprehensive and
23 cost-effective manner, to recruit partners such as service agencies,
24 civic organizations, the residents, and other volunteers to assess the
25 needs and resources of the community and formulate policy, and the
26 ability to coordinate and integrate the services offered. The bill
27 further defines the target community for the pilot project, adds a
28 specific reference to transportation services as an important support
29 service, specifies various requirements of the report to be done by
30 the lead agency in evaluating the pilot program, and provides that
31 the lead agency may allocate up to 7.5% of grant funds toward the
32 costs of its program evaluation.